



## Evaluation of infiltrated $\text{Bi}_2\text{V}_{0.9}\text{Cu}_{0.1}\text{O}_{5.35}$ , $\text{Ce}_{0.9}\text{Gd}_{0.1}\text{O}_{1.95}$ and $\text{Bi}_2\text{V}_{0.9}\text{Cu}_{0.1}\text{O}_{5.35}$ -based composite cathodes for solid oxide fuel cells

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# EVALUATION OF INFILTRATED $\text{Bi}_2\text{V}_{0.9}\text{Cu}_{0.1}\text{O}_{5.35}$ , $\text{Ce}_{0.9}\text{Gd}_{0.1}\text{O}_{1.95}$ AND $\text{Bi}_2\text{V}_{0.9}\text{Cu}_{0.1}\text{O}_{5.35}$ – BASED COMPOSITE CATHODES FOR SOLID OXIDE FUEL CELLS

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## Introduction

The compound  $\text{Bi}_2\text{V}_{0.9}\text{Cu}_{0.1}\text{O}_{5.35}$  (BICUVOX) exhibits very high oxide ion conductivities – about two orders of magnitude higher than that of other oxide ion conductors at low temperatures (<500°C) [1]. In a solid oxide fuel cell cathode where high ionic conductivity, high catalytic activity and high electronic conductivity are essential, it is possible to use BICUVOX as an ion conducting component in a composite. However, the choice of BICUVOX in this way is restricted by its micro-structural instability and reaction with other cell components during processing and during operation at high temperatures. A way to mitigate the problem of reactivity of BICUVOX with other materials is to separate the processing of BICUVOX with that of the desired electro-catalyst. This can be accomplished through an infiltration method. In this technique, a liquid solution usually composed of dissolved metal nitrates is introduced into a backbone followed by firing. The present study investigates the electrochemical performance of cathodes prepared using a BICUVOX backbone that is infiltrated with  $\text{La}_{0.6}\text{Sr}_{0.4}\text{CoO}_{3-\delta}$  (LSC40). The performance of the cathodes is investigated as a function of firing temperature of the BICUVOX backbone and the number of infiltrations. The obtained results are compared to high performance electrodes prepared by infiltrating LSC40 into a  $\text{Ce}_{0.9}\text{Gd}_{0.1}\text{O}_{1.95}$  (CGO10) backbone [2]. Theoretically, the replacement of CGO10 with a much higher ionic conductivity BICUVOX should result in a much higher performance cathode.

## Experimental

The starting BICUVOX material was prepared by conventional solid-state synthesis. The electrical conductivity of a dense BICUVOX sample was measured using an ac four-point impedance measurement technique. Porous backbones (BICUVOX and BICUVOX-CGO10, 50:50 vol%) for infiltration were prepared by screen printing onto a dense CGO10 electrolyte followed by firing. The backbones were infiltrated multiple times with LSC40 and PdCo(40%) followed by firing. The electrochemical performance and chemical compatibility among the materials were investigated.

## Results and Discussion

The total conductivity of the BICUVOX at 500°C was measured to  $0.057 \text{ S cm}^{-1}$  which is approximately 10 times higher than CGO10 at this temperature. A firing

temperature greater than 800°C was necessary to ensure adhesion to the dense CGO10 electrolyte. However, at this high temperature the BICUVOX loses porosity due to extensive sintering. From scanning electron microscopy and X-ray diffraction the formation of several phases was revealed. The polarization resistances ( $R_p$ ) at 500°C, measured using electrochemical impedance spectroscopy on symmetrical cells in ambient air were  $41 \text{ } \Omega \text{ cm}^2$  and  $49 \text{ } \Omega \text{ cm}^2$  for BICUVOX backbones infiltrated 6 times with LSC40 and PdCo40 (all fired at 500°C), respectively. These values are approximately 100 times higher than the one obtained for the CGO10 backbone infiltrated with the same amount of LSC40[2]. The values of  $R_p$  as function of the reciprocal absolute temperature are shown in Fig. 1. The inferior cathode performance using BICUVOX backbones is attributed to a poor microstructure and the chemical reactivity with the dense CGO10 electrolyte and with the infiltrated material.

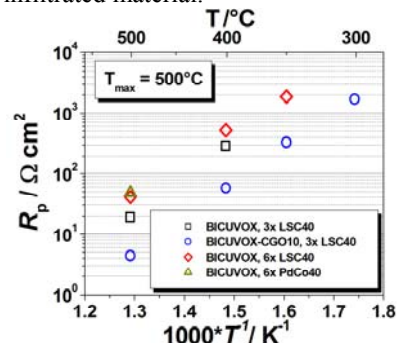


Fig. 1 Polarization resistance,  $R_p$ , as a function of the reciprocal absolute temperature for all the infiltrated cathodes. The infiltrated materials were fired at 500°C.

## Conclusions

The study has investigated the use of BICUVOX as a backbone material for infiltration. The polarization resistance of the electrode prepared with the BICUVOX backbone was approximately a factor of 100 higher than that of a corresponding electrode prepared using a CGO10 backbone. The poor performance of the BICUVOX backbone is attributed to a coarse microstructure and chemical reaction between the BICUVOX and electrolyte/electro-catalyst.

## References

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